Illinois History
A Magazine for Young People
April, 2008
Volume 61, # 3

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Elijah P. Lovejoy: A Religious Abolitionist Leader

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Heroes throughout time have come in all shapes and sizes from all parts of the world. Elijah Parish Lovejoy, born November 9, 1802, near Albion, Maine, was no exception to this rule. The eldest child of Reverend Daniel Lovejoy and his wife, Elizabeth, Elijah lived on a frontier farm that housed an extremely religious family of eight. To emphasize this fact, he was an intelligent child who learned to read at the young age of four through excerpts from the Bible. This idea of communication through written text would later be a reoccurring theme in Lovejoy's career. He went on to become a minister himself, but also a powerful anti-slavery editor. However, the idea of communicating through words was not the only thing that got him interested in journalism. Religion played a very important role as well. Had the religious conversion of Elijah P. Lovejoy not taken place, his journalistic approach to voicing his abolitionist views might not have even been thought of.

Although the articles he later became famous for were not written until years after, the time before Lovejoy's conversion was not held at a standstill. On the contrary, his life was kept busy and productive. The top of this long list of achievements begins with Lovejoy's move to St. Louis, Missouri, and the establishment of a private high school there. He wished to pattern it after the academies of the east coast to offer something better, in his opinion, to the St. Louis community. A while later, T. J. Miller, of the *St. Louis Times*, approached Elijah with the opportunity to become partner of his newspaper "for a journalistic career represented everything he most desired." It had been

an option he considered during childhood. Throughout Lovejoy's stay at the *Times*, he gained much practice criticizing certain people and events, most of which was directed at President Jackson, who he opposed at the time. However, at this stage in his life, Lovejoy was not yet passionate in this line of work and took a much longed for break. Some element crucial to his life had been missing.

It was at this point that Elijah experienced something outside himself. He underwent a religion conversion of which he wrote many letters to his parents and siblings who shared his immediate joy. Prior to this period of happiness, Elijah had been deeply depressed: "Sorrow had taken hold upon me, and a sense of my long career in sin and rebellion against God, lay heavy upon my soul. But it pleased God, and blesses be his holy name, to grant me, as I humbly hope, that very night joy and peace in believing." At this milestone in his life, Elijah felt empowered. This newfound strength granted him the chance to spread his knowledge to others. To achieve this feat, in 1831 he joined the First Presbyterian Church, where he decided to become a minister. Then he moved east to study at Princeton Theological Seminary. In April 1833, Lovejoy was licensed to preach, returned to St. Louis and started something that would eventually influence the lives of many—the *St. Louis Observer*. This newspaper began as a religious paper, but quickly became a voice against slavery. Because of his recent spiritual confidence, Elijah was passionate about getting others to believe and do the right thing, as he was trying to do. This, coupled with the natural writing talent he possessed, his paper became a collection of abolitionist editorials and articles.

Unfortunately, trouble arose. Many in the state of Missouri disapproved of abolitionist ideals. In response to seeing a slave burned at the stake, Lovejoy's editorials

started openly attacking slavery. Those that opposed him were instantly angered and wrecked his press in 1836. To their dismay, this did not stop Lovejoy from printing. He moved across the river to Alton, in the free state of Illinois, and tried to publish there as the editor of the *Alton Observer*. Regrettably, his printing press was destroyed several times, until finally a mob murdered Lovejoy on November 7, 1837. This was all in the name of protecting his views.

A man of great power and strength, Elijah P. Lovejoy wanted nothing except to get his point across. His goal in later life was to get others to convert to Presbyterianism and abolish slavery. He did this using the best means he knew how, through writing and religion. It was the latter that really influenced his thought process and beliefs. He is not alone in the world when it comes to this idea. Everyone is influenced by their environment. However, in Lovejoy's society it was a rare occasion when someone took the environment they lived in and tried to make it better for generations to come. Luckily for the world, he did just this and succeeded and beyond. [From Merton L. Dillon, *Elijah P. Lovejoy*; "Elijah Parish Lovejoy." <http://www.he.net/~altonweb/history/lovejoy/>. (Sept. 7, 2007); Beriah Green, *The Martyr: A Discourse in Commemoration of the Rev. Elijah P. Lovejoy*; and Henry Tanner, *The Martyrdom of Lovejoy; an account of the life, trials, and perils of Rev. Elijah P. Lovejoy*.]

Joseph Medill

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Joseph Medill was born in 1877 in New Burnswick, Canada. He grew up in Ohio and became a lawyer in his adult life. Medill later settled in Illinois. He bought a part of the *Chicago Tribune* with Charles Ray. They were staunch abolitionists and supported Abraham Lincoln strongly. Medill is important to history because he was the owner of a prestigious newspaper and a mayor.

Joseph Medill was raised in Ohio and mostly educated himself. He became a lawyer but disliked it and changed his career to journalism. He worked at several newspapers in Ohio in the early 1850s. According to historians, almost every town in those days supported "at least one newspaper and had at least two in competition," according to historian Robert Howard. After gaining experience in the business, Medill moved to Illinois and bought a part of the *Chicago Tribune* with Charles Ray. Together they bought an interest in the paper in 1855 and gained controlling interest in 1874. Medill is best known for his accomplishments at the *Tribune* during Chicago's time as a "thriving publishing center" as historian John Keiser called it. The *Tribune* became popular because of interesting publications such as the revised New Testament and the Keeley cure for alcoholism.

Medill was an abolitionist and supported Abraham Lincoln. He was one of the first members of the Republican Party, and is even credited for coining the term "Republican." Medill was said to have tried to persuade Lincoln to issue the Emancipation Proclamation several months before Lincoln wanted to. Medill and his

partner at the *Tribune*, Charles Ray, wanted Lincoln to be nominated for the presidency and were said to be "ready to put the *Tribune* at Lincoln's disposal." Their paper actually did play a part in Lincoln's nomination and election by publishing Lincoln's speeches and propaganda.

Medill ran for mayor of Chicago as a Republican and was elected on the Republican Fireproof Ticket in the aftermath of the Great Chicago Fire. He served one term, from 1871 to 1874. One of his greatest accomplishments as mayor was helping to establish the Chicago Public Library. He also supported state regulation of the corrupted and misused Chicago grain elevators. However, Medill was not popular among Germans. In Chicago, Germans were the "most populous foreign-born element," in historian Howard's words. These problems were part of the reason he resigned and did not run for reelection.

Medill dominated the *Tribune* until his death in 1899 at his winter home in San Antonio, Texas. He had achieved many things in his life: he had educated himself, been a lawyer and editor/publisher, started a family, enlarged the *Chicago Tribune*, and ruled the city of Chicago. Medill's two daughters had children that grew up to work in journalism and donated family land to the Girl Scouts organization to build Camp Medill McCormick in Stillman Valley, Illinois. His summer home, now called Cantingny, is a garden, picnic, and museum area for the U. S. Army. The Medill School of Journalism was founded at Northwestern University in 1921 and named after Joseph Medill. It is now one of the top journalism schools in the country.

Joseph Medill was an important figure in history. He is mostly remembered for his work at the *Chicago Tribune*. In his years there, Medill enlarged the circulation of the

Tribune greatly. Medill also served as the mayor of Chicago, although he was not very successful. He strongly supported Abraham Lincoln and the abolitionists, who won the Civil War and ended slavery. Medill should be remembered for his achievements in the United States. [From Peter Andrews, "How We Got Lincoln," *American Heritage*, November 1988; Robert P. Howard, *Illinois*; John H. Keiser, *Building for the Centuries: Illinois 1865-1898*; Peter C. Magrath, "Munn v. Illinois: A Foot in the Door." *American Heritage* February 1864: 88-92. "Joseph Medill Biography." Biography.com <http://www.biography.com> (Oct. 17, 2007); "Joseph Medill." <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USACWmedill.htm> (Oct. 17, 2007); and "Joseph Medill." Answers.com 1 Oct. 17, 2007.]

The Life of Ida B. Wells and Her Influence on Illinois

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It was 1863, African-American slaves had just heard about the Emancipation Proclamation and rejoiced that they were officially freed and had the basic rights of citizenship. A few years later there were African-American lawyers, businessmen and writers. Unfortunately, the Jim Crow Laws enforcing segregation were soon to come and make things much worse. As these matters began to unfold, a young woman named Ida B. Wells noticed the horrifying effects of these laws and decided to take action. Because of journalist Ida B. Wells' articles on lynching and segregation, readers in Illinois discovered the seriousness of these subjects, motivating them to action.

Ida B. Wells was born on July 16, 1862, in Holly Springs, Mississippi. At age sixteen, Ida lost both her parents and one of her brothers to yellow fever. Determined to keep the family together, Ida purposefully took the appearance of an older woman in order to become the guardian of her siblings. This situation molded Ida to become a courageous, strong woman. Also, Ida took a teaching job to help raise money to take care of her siblings.

Besides teaching, Ida began to take an interest in journalism as a young woman. In Memphis, Ida became a member of the Evening Star Literary Club and became the writer and editor of their journals. As a result of an article she wrote in the Memphis African-American newspaper, *Free Speech*, Ida lost her teaching job. The article criticized the poor Memphis school conditions and exposed an adulterous

minister. As a result, Ida made journalism her new career and started her lifelong crusade for justice. Soon, Ida became a columnist for *The Living Way* under the pen name "Iola." Her column in *The Living Way* was picked up by newspapers in major cities, earning her the nickname "Princess of the Press."

Not only did Ida fight for justice through her journalism, she showed it through political activism. When her close friend, a black man named Thomas Moss, built a grocery store across the street from a white man's grocery store, his store began to get more business, eventually leading to a riot. Moss and his companions were unjustly jailed and a violent mob dragged them out of jail and lynched them. Because of this, Ida started to encourage fellow blacks to follow her and leave Memphis. Her pleadings met success as 6,000 blacks fled to other states such as Oklahoma, Missouri and Illinois.

In 1893, Ida moved to Chicago, Illinois, and her work gained even more importance. At the time, the World's Columbian Exposition was to take place in Chicago. Every ethnic group was represented except African-Americans; Ida took a stand. She published the booklet *Reasons Why the Colored American is Not in the World's Columbian Expedition*, along with co-authors Frederick Douglass and Ferdinand Barnett, a prominent Chicago attorney. Wells and Barnett were married on June 27, 1895. Just after a week of marriage Ferdinand sold the Chicago *Conservator*, an African-American newspaper, to Ida and she became head writer and editor.

Ida was now the first black woman in Illinois to have her own paper. True to form she used this opportunity to increase Illinoisans' awareness of racial injustices

as she encouraged her readers to become leaders and take action to change the society that they lived in. The *Conservator* proved to be a successful influence for change when another paper, the *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, followed its example and became Illinois' first white-owned newspaper to denounce lynchings. The *Inter-Ocean* hired Ida as a journalist and one of her assignments was to investigate the race riots in East St. Louis, Illinois. She documented the victims' stories in a pamphlet entitled, *The East St. Louis Massacre, the Greatest Outrage of the Century*.

Working for the *Chicago Inter-Ocean* in 1894, she was sent to England to speak out against lynchings. She hoped that the British clergy would speak out; they did and they published her work. After she returned from England in 1895, Ida published *A Red Record; Tabulated Statistics and Alleged Causes of Lynchings in the U. S.* This book told the inside story of all the lynchings recorded in the United States since the Emancipation Proclamation, including several in Illinois. It revealed how there had been a gross lack of action by state and local governments, and that lynchings had begun to decrease. Her work really had made a difference. Ida continued in her work until she died in 1931.

Our state was privileged to have such a great leader, one of Illinois' first investigative reporters, making a huge difference. Ida spent her whole life trying to improve treatment of blacks and reforming Illinois. She persistently spotlighted what was wrong in society, recording lynchings, writing columns and pamphlets, founding clubs and civic organizations, and investigating intolerable crimes. Moreover, by her example she proved to all that blacks had the same capabilities as

white people, particularly her ability to use the press to speak out against segregation and advance black rights. She pushed for the laws to be enforced against people who participated in racial hate crimes; this was a great service to Illinois. Overall, she moved the Emancipation Proclamation closer to its fulfillment, not what segregationists wanted it to be, but what Lincoln wanted it to be.

In conclusion, because of newspaper writer Ida B. Wells' articles on lynching and segregation, readers in Illinois discovered the seriousness of these subjects, causing them to take action. At one time in her life, Ida B. Wells commented about how the fight for segregation will never be over. Sadly, this has proved true today. Still, though, Ida B. Wells wanted everyone to fight against segregation in their own crusade for justice. No wonder she said "Let your songs be songs of faith and hope." [From Dennis B. Fradin and Judith B. Fradin, *Ida B. Wells Mother of Civil Rights Movement*; Jone J. Lewis, *Ida B. Wells-Barnett* <http://womenshistory.about.com/od/wellsbarnett/a/ida_b_wells.htm.> (Aug. 27, 2007); Linda O. McMurry, *To Keep the Waters Troubled: The Life of Ida B. Wells*; Angela S. Medearis, *Princess of the Press*; PBS Video, *Ida B. Wells A Passion for Justice*, Dorothy Sterling, *Black Foremothers Three Lives*; Elizabeth Van Steenwyr, *Ida B. Wells-Barnett Woman of Courage*; and Ida B. Wells-Barnett, *Classics in Black Studies on Lynchings*.]

Standing Up for Equality; Paper in Hand

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> I did not yield to the wishes here expressed, and in consequence have been persecuted ever since. But I have kept a good conscience in the matter, and that repays me for all I have suffered, or can suffer. I have sworn eternal opposition to slavery, and by the blessing of God, I will never go back.
>
> Elijah P. Lovejoy, October 24, 1837

Abolitionists are a popular topic, but there are many aspects that are uncovered. Everyone has learned about Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, but less know the importance of the *Alton Observer*, a liberal anti-slavery newspaper started by Elijah Lovejoy in 1836 after he moved the *St. Louis Observer* to Alton, Illinois. Lovejoy lived only thirty-five years, but that was plenty of time for him to leave a permanent mark on our society. Both papers contributed to Lovejoy's dedication to freedom, but the more influential were the events that ensued in Alton, Illinois. Lovejoy wrote many articles like "What are the doctrines of anti-slavery men?" which was written to combat the growing league of slavery supporters that strongly opposed Lovejoy. Elijah Lovejoy's writings and dedication to his cause helped the anti-slavery movement to spread throughout Illinois. His journalism had a permanent influence on Illinois, and the entire country.

Though it may seem like there were not, there was a lot of abolitionists in the country in the 1800s. Though Elijah Lovejoy did not recognize himself as an abolitionist,

he was. His newspaper, the *St. Louis Observer*, was a religious newspaper that contained many articles denouncing slavery as an acceptable practice. The most influential article that he wrote was "Awful Burning and Savage Barbarity." It was released in the May 5, 1836, issue of the *Observer* and attacked a mob that burned Francis Macintosh, a free black man. Macintosh had, the day previously, killed one man and wounded another who was trying to take him to jail for "disturbing the peace." That night, a mob broke into the jail and dragged Macintosh to a tree where he was tied up and burned alive. In the article, Lovejoy addressed the barbarity of the mob's actions. In describing the actions of the mob, he said, "a hardened wretch certainly, and one deserved to die, but not *thus* to die-it forces him from beneath the [reign] of our Constitution and Laws, hurries him to the stake and burns him alive." This equalitarian attitude was common in Lovejoy's writings and speaking. This mob was tried by Judge Lawless, who condemned Lovejoy for Macintosh's actions, saying that liberal newspapers like Lovejoy's *Observer* "fantasize the Negro and excite him against the white man." Lawless tried to condemn Lovejoy and totally ignore the mob's injustice. He asked the jury to consider things "to punish, if they cannot prevent, those exhortations to rebellion." In response to this the Grand Jury acquitted members of the mob. The ensuing conflict with Judge Lawless pushed his newspaper to national importance. It was during this time that Lovejoy decided to move to Alton.

No matter the other issues going on, Lovejoy always stuck to his guns on the issue of slavery. After one reader wrote to him complaining about the amount of anti-slavery material in the *Observer*, Lovejoy responded,

> If I could hold my peace on this subject with a clear conscience, I would most assuredly do it. My course has cost me many a valued friend. But I cannot, and I am sure you do not ask or wish a Christian to connive at what he believes to be a sin, for the sake of popularity.

Opposition to emancipation became more common. There were mobs all over the country. As the public opposition to Lovejoy grew, he became bolder. In the February 9, 1837 issue, he took his strongest stand ever. He published "What is Slavery?" in the *Observer* and an article in which he said "Two million and a half of our fellow creatures are groaning in bondage, crushed to the earth, deprived of rights which their Maker gave them." He said that not only was slavery a sin, but those who did not oppose slavery or move against it were fighting against God.

Lovejoy was killed by a mob on November 7, 1873. He remained in a warehouse with his friends defending his new printing press. When he went outside to prevent them from burning the building down, he was shot five times. Lovejoy is now considered the first martyr for freedom of speech. President Herbert Hoover said "Elijah Parish Lovejoy was killed while defending free speech and free press in the United States. Since his martyrdom no man has openly challenged free speech and free press in America." Lovejoy's death is perhaps one of the greater influences to the anti-slavery movement, along with events like the publishing of the book *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. "Within weeks after Lovejoy's death, membership in antislavery societies multiplied, and the anti-slavery sentiment increased," according to Paul Simon.

Lovejoy once said "There is no scarcity of people who are oppressed. There is only a scarcity of men and women with eyes clear enough to see or hearts big enough to act." It is his actions in the world of journalism that proves him to be one of these people. His strong felt articles along with his controversial actions contributed to the beginning of the abolitionist movement, which shaped the future of our country. [From *Alton Observer* 7 Nov. 1837. <http://www.altonweb.com/history/lovejoy/aol.html>. (Sept. 6, 2007); Elijah P. Lovejoy, "Awful Murder and Savage Barbarity." *St. Louis Observer* May 5, 1836; Paul Simon, *Freedom's Champion*; and Henry Tanner, *The Martyrdom of Lovejoy*.]

Peoria Journal Star History

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Throughout the many papers that have led up to the *Peoria Journal Star* people have expressed their ideas, and therefore affected the community and their ideas greatly. As a result of the *Peoria Journal Star* and its predecessors, a rich history was created by Peoria's journalism industry.

The early years of Peoria's journalism industry started off slowly, and the *Peoria Journal Star* began with the *Daily Transcript* on December 3, 1855. The founders were self-proclaimed independents when the Democratic Party was breaking down. Soon after, the *Transcript* was sold to Nathan Geers. The profits from the ads were steady, but the *Transcript* needed to make a serious profit. Peoria was also a very politically challenging town. A paper called the *Democratic Press* was also printed at the same time as the *Transcript*. The *Transcript* won the German readership but the *Transcript* switched owners. The new owner made it even more Republican than its previous owners. The citizens of Peoria supported the paper during hard times and through the Civil War. The *Transcript* succeeded grandly; it beat out four local Democratic papers from 1861 to 1865.

In the 1870s the *Transcript* did not do very well; it came under new ownership after the successful owner retired, and two brothers were the new owners. As the struggle continued at *Transcript* headquarters, Baldwin and J. B. Barnes started the *Peoria Journal* on December 3, 1877. Soon after this new paper began, in 1880 the *Transcript* changed to R. H. Whiting. On May 8, 1881 the *Transcript*

published the first Sunday paper in Peoria's history. The business was becoming more competitive; it made the *Transcript* more distinguished than the other newspapers.

Another new daily paper to Peoria journalism industry was the *Herald*. This company performed a combination of printing and book binding. The *Herald* was a Democratic paper and this was an important change for Peorians. When the *Herald* began as the third part of the *Peoria Journal Star* family tree it commented very boldly. On Friday, December 30, 1898, the *Herald* made one of its most important moves during its entire history. It announced on the front page of the paper that "*Herald* purchases the *Transcript* and *Times*- Is Now The Only Morning Daily Paper In Peoria." After the *Herald* purchased the *Transcript*; the combined papers were still called the *Herald*. On May 10, 1899, the flag was changed to *Peoria Herald-Transcript*. A new concept was introduced to Peoria, the Republican and Democratic views would not compete against each other; they would be expressed equally in the same daily. Throughout the next ten years the paper did not do very well. On August 17, 1914, the papers split. Then, the *Transcript* lowered its price to only one cent per issue. This brought back a lot of readers because the paper was affordable.

The new member of the *Peoria Journal Star* family tree was the *Evening Journal*. This new newspaper was founded by Eugene Baldwin and J. B. Barnes. The *Journal* became bigger and more modernized to help it dominate the Peoria journalism industry. Artwork and pictures began to appear to vary the black print. The town grew as a midwestern railroad hub and was soon to boom in industry and

distilleries. The paper included real photos and Sunday comics. The *Journal* was one of the most influential papers in Peoria's history because it changed Peoria's literature industry and, overall, modernized the town and its economy. A new company took over the *Journal* on February 2, 1900, and made it a Republican paper after a decade of non-political favorites. Over seven years after 1891 the *Journal* and *Transcript* lost ground to the *Herald*, those two papers were bought and combined making a lot of Peoria's news business under one "corporate umbrella."

On September 27, 1897, the *Evening Star* was a new paper to Peoria. The owners said "They started on hope and a bucket of ink." Soon after the *Star* began "We had the snappiest paper in town," said Charles Lambert the editor. The *Journal-Transcript* still dominated the industry at its seventieth anniversary. The *Star's* aim was ad revenue and readership. This was a task that most of the papers in Peoria were struggling with because there were five daily papers. It was important for the *Star* to keep its readers and modify its technology. To do this, the *Star* had to borrow heavily against their assets. Their competitor, the *Journal-Transcript*, used its ad revenues that slowly came in to purchase their new equipment. Soon the *Star* began to correct its financial mistakes. At this time the *Journal-Transcript* needed a new printing press, and the *Star's* was state of the art. Hence, on January 3, 1944, a joint operation of the *Star* and the *Journal-Transcript* occurred. It was perfect timing for this joining because both newspapers were in need of something which the other had. In their cooperation, both papers occupied separate newsrooms while continuing on separately and fiercely. The company formed was Peoria Newspapers Incorporated.

For the first time, on January 9, 1949, readers picked up the first paper named the *Peoria Journal Star*. This was the *Star's* and *Journal's* first combined Sunday paper. The *Journal Star*, until July 4, 1955, was only a Sunday paper; on this date the first weekday paper was published. This was now a large daily in Peoria, and it would need a large supply of employees to work every day of the week.

As a result of the *Peoria Journal Star* and its predecessors, a rich history was created by Peoria's journalism industry. Four papers, through mergers, became six and all led to the dominant daily that the *Peoria Journal Star* is today. [From *About The Journal Star*. Peoria Journal Star Inc. <http://pjstar.com/services/journalstar/history.shtml>. (Aug. 28, 2008); Jerry Klein, *Peoria!*; Jerry Klein, *The Very Best of. . . Old Peoria;* and Michael Smothers, "Peoria's Paper Trail." *Journal Star* 25 Sep. 2005, H3-H6. *W.P.A. Newspaper Index of Peoria 1838-1864* (Sept. 25, 2005).]

Watergate and the *Chicago Tribune*: Exposing the Truth

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Despite the claim that journalists and newspapers should be entirely non-partisan, bias is often unavoidable. Though journalists often try to preserve nonpartisanship, it is rarely done successfully. The *Chicago Tribune* was no stranger to bias. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the *Chicago Tribune* was known throughout America as a "staunchly Republican" newspaper. The Midwest and Chicago, especially, had been dominated by Republican voters and ideals. However, on May 1, 1974, the atmosphere changed entirely. The *Chicago Tribune*, led by editor Clayton Kirkpatrick, published a 246,000-word transcript of President Nixon's infamous Watergate tapes, exposing Nixon's criminal activities to the world. The *Tribune* overcame its Republican slant to expose Richard Nixon's lies and crimes to the American public.

In June 1972, a group of burglars broke into the Watergate apartment complex in Washington, D. C., the Democratic National Committee's headquarters. Secret plans were made for the burglars to sabotage the Democrats' plans by copying their files and gaining access to undisclosed documents. Gradually, evidence established the White House, namely, President Richard Milhous Nixon, as the ringleader of a massive government conspiracy to eliminate his enemies. However, the American public was not entirely convinced. Some believed the story, calling for Nixon's impeachment or resignation. Others, however, refused to believe the accusations, calling them outlandish and ridiculous. The Senate Watergate Committee was immediately set up to investigate the matter. Former White House aide Alexander Butterfield declared that a recording

system installed in 1971 recorded all conversations and phone calls within the White House. This system, Butterfield revealed, could potentially determine Nixon's guilt or innocence. Nixon was then ordered to subpoena the tapes by Chief Justice John Sirica. The transcripts of the tapes were finally released.

Tribune publisher Stanton R. Cook and editor Clayton Kirkpatrick immediately decided to publish the complete, 246,000-word transcript the next day. It was the only newspaper in the entire country to do so. Cook stated his motive for immediately publishing the transcripts, saying, "We believe the President's release of the tape transcripts is an event of the utmost significance. It certainly ranks as one of the most historic events affecting government in this century." Some, perhaps, might have been concerned that the *Tribune's* transcripts of the tapes might have provided a Republican slant on the events. However, the *Tribune* team, chiefly Cook and Kirkpatrick, were determined to publish the documents for their journalistic value alone. The *Tribune* kept its publications free of Republican bias, declaring, "We didn't make any changes at all. All we did, actually, was mark the copy for the typesetters—capitalization, paragraphs, that sort of thing. We didn't change anything—either additions or deletions." The importance of the transcripts overshadowed the *Tribune's* political prejudices, pioneering a path of genuine journalistic integrity.

The *Tribune* was no stranger to crunch-time publications, having published the Versailles Treaty in 1919 and the Yalta Papers in 1955, the latter previously kept secret for a decade. However, the monumental task utilized hundreds of staff members to publish the text in a few hours, beating even the Government Printing Office's (GPO)

publication. A special 44-page section of the newspaper was set aside in which the activities of Nixon and his aides were exposed.

Once published, the transcripts provided an in-depth, disturbing view of the president, as well as concrete proof of Nixon's criminal activities. Though the American public was informed of the scandal itself, the tapes cemented the extent of Nixon's wrongdoings. The tapes proved his guilt, revealing his involvement in cover-ups and the initial Watergate debacle itself. The *Tribune's* copies sold out immediately, each copy of the transcripts selling for 15 cents. In truth, this journalism "miracle" was important because it made the details of Watergate widely available to the American public. Because of the cheap price and wide distribution, many Americans across the country were given a "fascinating document" that exposed their president for the criminal he was. Said Dan Haggerty, a faithful *Tribune* reader, "I picked up extra copies [of the transcripts] to send to my friends."

America knew definitely that its president was a criminal. In an editorial on May 9, 1972, Clayton Kirkpatrick declared, "We saw the public man in his first administration, and we were impressed. Now in about 300,000 words we have seen the private man, and we are appalled." The editorial continued, calling for Nixon's resignation and impeachment, a very surprising move due to Kirkpatrick's known Republican leanings.

Though it would have been tempting for Kirkpatrick and the rest of the team to edit the transcripts in favor of Nixon, the *Chicago Tribune* instead guaranteed that the truth would be widely available to the American public. Its publication of the Watergate transcripts helped to mark the end of America's support of President Nixon. Thanks to

the *Chicago Tribune*, Nixon's activities were exposed and America knew the truth at last: that Nixon, indeed, was a crook. [From Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, *The Final Days*; Jeff Hay, ed. *Richard M. Nixon*; "How We Got Transcripts," *Chicago Tribune* May 1, 1974; William Mullen, *Chicago Days: 150 Defining Moments in the Life of a Great City*; "Nixon's Transcription of Watergate Tapes," *Chicago Tribune* May 1, 1974; "Nixon Tape Transcripts Publication Wins Praise," *Chicago Tribune* May 2, 1974; and Frank Starr, "Nixon Date: a Raw, Rare Insight," *Chicago Tribune* May 1, 1974.]

Walter Ansel Strong

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On August 13, 1883, Walter Ansel Strong was born in Chicago. His father, Dr. Albert Strong, was a physician and his mother, Idea Cook. His father died when he was fifteen. The family was left with very little money.

His uncle worked at the *Chicago Daily News* where he was a wealthy editor. Strong used his uncle's wealth to assist him in getting through school and securing his education. He attended an engineering course at Lewis Institute and a law course at John Marshall School of Law. He then took a job at a newspaper in Beloit, Wisconsin, and supported himself through Beloit College. He graduated in 1905 with a Bachelors Degree.

By now, his education was strong, but he had very little money and was still trying to support his mother in Chicago. In 1913, he married Josephine Havalland Webster, a daughter of a wealthy manufacturer in Illinois. The couple later gave birth to five children: Walter Jr., John, Robert, Ann, and David.

Walter moved back to Chicago and started as an audit clerk for his uncle. The *Chicago Daily News* was a very prominent newspaper at the time, and Walter moved his way up to business manager rather quickly and surprisingly. In 1925 the publisher of the paper, Victor Lawson, died. In December of the same year, a group led by Walter purchased the company for 14 million dollars and became an editor and publisher.

When Walter was a young boy, he was very interested in radio broadcasting in addition to journalism. In 1922, when building was done for a new location for the

Chicago Daily News, he "purchased half interest in a local station and became the first newspaper in Chicago, and one of the first in the country, to operate a radio station. Walter was the chairman of the board of directors for the station.

"Walter was a self made man. All of his success was made on his own, with little to no help from those around him."

With Walter's growing family and the summer heat in the city, Walter decided to build a summer retreat. Walter purchased 60 acres along the Rock River from Wallace Heckman, the treasurer of the University of Chicago in 1928. It was two miles south of his wife's childhood summer home, called "Bee Tree Farm."

In 1931, Walter went to his home in Winnetka, Illinois, for dinner after golfing with his son John. While in his room, he was struck with a heart attack. By the time the doctor arrived, Walter was dead. He was forty-six. "His death came as a surprise to both his family and friends. He seemed to be in perfect health." Walter's ashes were spread on the grounds of his summer castle, among trees that were planted in his memoriam. When his son David was killed in World War II, his ashes were also spread there. The area became known as "The Circle of Pines."

Walter Strong's remarkable journalistic career made him one of the most remembered men of his day. He was known for his compassion and love for his family, friends, and employees. His castle still exists today, keeping the legend he left behind very much alive. [From Gary L. Batty, *Honoring the Past. . . Forging the Future: Stronghold Celebrates 40 Years of Ministry*; Keith Call, *Oregon, Illinois*; Ben Duffy, "Walter A. Strong," *The Youth's Companion* July 28, 1927; Student Historian's interview with Jan Hartman, Oct. 8, 2007; Dumas Malone, *Dictionary of American Biography,*

Volume IX; and "Walter Strong, Publisher of the News, Dies," *Chicago Daily Tribune* May 11, 1931.]

Black Newspapers in Danville, Illinois

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Blacks did not have the same rights as whites throughout American history. Many blacks were not able to read the public newspapers and therefore created their own newspapers. Fredrick Douglass inspired many African Americans because he wrote the *North Star* newspaper. The black newspapers were a way blacks could relax and take the time to enjoy the works of their own people. Blacks did not only use the newspapers for entertainment values, but they also used the newspapers to gain information about the Underground Railroad and other black movements. These newspapers would also warn blacks about upcoming riots against them. There were many black newspapers written in the state of Illinois. The popular newspapers written in Danville were the *Black Vanguard*, the *Illinois Times*, the *International*, and the *Inter-State Echo*.

The *Black Vanguard* was one of the newspapers written in Danville, Illinois. It is a mysterious newspaper because the author and the editor along with the date it was written are unknown. The *Illinois Times* was written from 1939 to 1941, and was edited by Edgar G. Harris. Another newspaper written in Danville was the *International*. It was edited by J. M. Batchman, and was written in 1901 and 1902. Charles W. Colley edited the *Inter-State Echo*, which was also written in Danville from 1909 to 1920. Because these newspapers were underground newspapers, there is not very much definitive information about them. The newspapers probably never left the city of Danville because everyday blacks publicized them. The newspapers

were not published because blacks did not have the wealth or the power to get their works published. Blacks knew they were discriminated against and would not get the chance to write in the local newspapers. The newspapers were also used to pass on the history of blacks to the future generation of black people, so they know all the hardships blacks had to endure.

There were many black newspapers written in Danville in the 1900s. Blacks used these papers to communicate with the black community. They also used them to stay updated on all the events in which blacks were involved. Many blacks just wanted the opportunity to express their feelings on paper and therefore wrote their own newspapers. The newspapers were a way the black community stood together as a group. The *Black Vanguard*, *Illinois Times*, *International*, and the *Inter-State Echo* were a few of the black newspapers written in Danville. Even though the intentions of the black newspapers were to leave a legacy to the future generations of blacks, they are almost difficult to discover, which is disappointing because many people are interested in what black people had to write about their lives during the 1900s. People know the newspapers existed due to the stories about them. If only blacks were given the opportunity to publicize their works, people would know more about their lifelong struggle. The newspapers played an important role in black history. [From Illinois Genealogy Trails History and Genealogy, Inter-State Echo, Oct. 5, 1912 <http://genealogytrails.com/ill/blacknews.html> (May 5, 2007).]

Robert A. Abbott – A Voice for Black Americans

Austin Kuhl
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Robert S. Abbott was born in Frederica, St. Simon's Island, Georgia on November 24, 1868, approximately three years after the Emancipation Proclamation. He seemed just like any other boy, but who knew that he would become a major black journalist. As an adult, Abbott attended Kent Law School in Chicago, Illinois and in 1905 started a major black newspaper, the *Chicago Defender*.

Born to two former slaves, Thomas and Flora Abbott, Robert's childhood was very difficult after his father passed away, when he was only one. Afterwards, Robert and his mother traveled to Savannah to live with her family, since Flora was rejected by the Abbott family. However, the Abbott family tried adopting Robert, but his mother fought for him even though she knew it would be difficult raising a child by herself. Robert's mother needed to hire a lawyer who filed a restraining order against the Abbott family. Robert enjoyed his childhood in Savannah by attending church and going to school daily and he later took a job at a newspaper.

In 1886, at age eighteen, Robert applied and was accepted at Beach Institute in Savannah, Georgia. While there, he was often mocked for his color, so he persuaded his stepfather to send him to Claflin University in Orangeburg, South Carolina. However, within six months, Robert had made up his mind to learn a trade and applied to Hampton Institute in southern Virginia. While waiting for his acceptance, Robert worked as an apprentice for a newspaper, the *Savannah Echo*. Once at Hampton, he was again set

apart, facing more prejudice and discrimination, but eventually completed his studies and graduated in 1896.

At age twenty eight, Robert, still looking for a career, returned to his hometown and became a part-time printer for his stepfather's paper, the *Woodville Times*. In 1897 he enrolled in Kent Law School in Chicago, Illinois and in May 1899 he graduated, as the only black in his class, with a law degree. After many failed attempts at finding a job, he gave up on being an attorney and returned to Chicago.

Back in Chicago, Robert became a part-time printer. A former friend and black politician, Louis B. Anderson, asked a former printing house involved in city work to hire Robert. He began work immediately. By 1904, Robert received word that his stepfather passed away, and since his stepfather was a former educator, Robert and his sister opened a school in his memory, on the premises of Pilgrim Academy in Georgia. Eventually, Robert returned to Chicago and started a black newspaper, even though there were three other major black newspapers, owning his own paper would give Robert the opportunity to talk about discrimination and the mistreating of blacks. He would encourage blacks to move from the South to search for a better life in the North. Through his newspaper, Robert became a voice that gave hope to all blacks.

On May 5, 1905, the *Chicago Defender* hit the streets. Not having enough money to hire help, Robert alone printed, folded and handed out the papers going door to door. His landlady allowed Robert to use her dinning room as his office for the next fifteen years and it became his headquarters.

In 1906, in Brownsville, Texas, black troops were accused of killing two white men. Fighting broke out in the town and within days, the troops received a dishonorable

discharge from the army. Robert and the *Chicago Defender* covered this incident, which led to the selling of over 20,000 papers nationwide, with more than two-thirds being sold outside of Chicago.

In 1908, Robert took publishing to a new level where he started his own publishing house. Even though, he hired several men, it was still mainly a one-man job. In 1915 Robert enlarged the *Defender*, making it an eight-column and eight-full size page paper. On the front cover of the newest edition, he notified the public about the death of Booker T. Washington. Although the *Defender* was selling roughly 180,000 papers, the income from the *Defender* was low, since unlike most papers, Robert's depended on circulation and not on advertisements. In October 1929 Robert's magazine, *Abbott Monthly*, hit the streets. Although it came with the stock market crash of 1929, *Abbott's Monthly*, published by Robert, sold almost 50,000 copies. It was one of the first magazines published for black Americans.

Now a recognized public figure, Robert was honored and became president of the Hampton alumni. In 1918, Robert married Helen Thompson Morrison, a widow. Soon the Abbotts became patrons to the Chicago Opera and began entertaining. However, in 1933 the couple was divorced. Soon after the Depression, Robert began training John Herman Henry Sengstacke, his half-brother's son, to take over the business, even sending him to his alma mater, Hampton Institute.

Over the next three years, Robert became sick with tuberculosis, the same illness his birth father had died from. He had become so helpless that, by the time of his death, he was permanently bedridden. Robert died on February 29, 1940.

Robert S. Abbott was a business man and hard working citizen. His success came from responding to the needs of all black Americans. This man changed the perspective of blacks and led them to believe that they could do anything. [From Robert L. Johns, *Robert S. Abbott*, <http://www.answers.com/topic/Robert-abbott#top> (Jan. 8, 2008); Estell Kenneth, *Reference Library of Black America Volume IV*; Roi Ottley, *The Lonely Warrier*; Donald A. Ritchie, *American Journalists*; and Wilhelmena S. Robinson, *Historical Negro Biographies*.]

Virginia "The Duchess" Marmaduke: Journalism's Royalty

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The Second World War played a crucial part in causing women to attain a more significant role in the workplace. With many of the nation's men going overseas to take part in combat, job vacancies started surfacing left and right. It was up to many women to end their lives as homemakers and go out and support their families. Numerous "male" jobs such as doctors, factory workers, and journalists began to go to women. One of the women who saw this opportunity was Virginia Marmaduke, also known as "The Duchess." Due to her fiery personality and animated nature, she went on to become one of the first female crime reporters in the city of Chicago. Marmaduke led the way for other women to follow in her footsteps to cover "hard news" and expose crime in Chicago at the time.

Marmaduke was born on June 21, 1908, in Carbondale, Illinois. At the age of ten, she and her family moved to Chicago, where she completed the majority of her primary and secondary schooling. She once recalled, "A teacher of mine told me I had a knack for writing and should develop it, so I told my father I wanted to be a newspaperman." As a result, she attended the University of Iowa to study journalism. While attending, she met her future husband, Harold Grear, and in April 1930, they were wed. Marmaduke moved back South to Herrin with Grear, thus leaving her unable to complete her degree. There she held her first job writing for the *Herrin Daily Journal*. After she and her husband divorced, she went to Chicago to find work.

After fruitlessly applying for the *Daily News*, Marmaduke then applied for a job at the *Chicago Sun*, garnering an interview that would be recognized as a prime example of Marmaduke's spunky character. She had failed to mention the type of news that she wanted to cover on her application. When the editor asked her why, she said, "I didn't like the choices. I want the blood and guts and the sex and the greed. I want to cover it all." The editor ended up hiring her, and soon enough, Marmaduke's career began to take off. The editor also bestowed upon her the title "The Duchess," as Marmaduke was too much of a mouthful to yell across a newsroom, and because she already had a "duke" in her name.

The Duchess became the first woman in Chicago to have a sports byline, and in 1945 she hit it big, covering stories that focused on crime, two of which were similar to the infamous Black Dahlia murder case. After covering a story about Josephine Ross, a mother who was murdered in June of that year, she went on to cover a story about Suzanne Degnan, a six-year-old whose murder in 1946 was almost identical to that of the previous year. Suzanne had been "decapitated cleanly with either an ax or a cleaver," cut up in the same fashion as Ross. The Duchess had interviewed between 600 and 700 people, determined to get the scoop on "The Crime That Shocked Chicago." Through more investigations, police later discovered that a man named William Heirens had some link to the murder, and he was convicted. The Duchess got the opportunity to interview the parents of the killers, and felt much sympathy for the families on both sides. Marmaduke later allowed a crime magazine to publish the story of her first hand accounts. Marmaduke's feisty personality and experience gave her the courage to keep reporting such stories.

Aside from covering crime, she also had to cover a variety of shocking subjects, such as the casualties of a fire at the La Salle Hotel. She recalled that during the event she "would become nauseous, going to throw up in an alley across the street before returning to her post." After having quit the *Sun-Times*, she then held her own radio and TV shows with the *Tribune*. Following her stint as a hostess for the New York World Fair in 1964, Marmaduke retired to Pickneyville, serving as Southern Illinois University's official ambassador. She was also known for being around "a scoop of students, regaling them with her pavement-pounding stories and soupcon of pithy advice." She died at the age of 93, in November 2001.

Though she was heralded as "the typical American Newspaper woman" by *This is Your Life*, Virginia Marmaduke's devotion and involvement in her stories showed how concerned in them she was, and could really give her readers an up close and personal look at the lives of real people, a relief from the distant and sometimes cold journalism of the day. Her intimacy with her job, whether it was hard news or human interest, helped inspire others to not only get the facts, but get to know them as well. Aspiring female journalists have learned from her that you do not need to be a man to cover hard news, and you can approach such stories with compassion as well. She is remembered today for saying, "Remember: newspapering won't make you into a millionaire, but it sure helps you live a full life." [From K. C. Jaehnig, "'The Duchess 'Virginia Marmaduke Dead at 93." *Southern Illinoisan* Nov. 21, 2001; "Obituaries." *Duquoin Evening Call* Jan. 4, 2002; and Cary O'dell, *Virginia Marmaduke*.]

Colonel Robert R. McCormick

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Robert Rutherford McCormick, also known as Colonel McCormick, was a well known publisher, editor, and soldier. He worked for the *Chicago Tribune* for most of his life. At one point, he was owner of the *Chicago Tribune*. McCormick was the owner for several decades. He was said to be one of the most powerful and controversial figures in journalism. McCormick was also sometimes referred to as the "greatest mind of the fourteenth century."

McCormick was born at 150 East Ontario Street in Chicago on July 30, 1880. He was the fifth Robert McCormick in his family's American history. He and his brother went to grade school in England while his father was a minister in London. While in England, McCormick learned how the countries of Europe worked, and how they fought wars just to enlarge their countries' territory. One summer McCormick earned a profitable amount of money installing doorbells to houses in his neighborhood. McCormick went to high school at Groton School in Groton, Maryland. When he was eighteen he left school to go live with his ill grandfather in San Antonio, Texas.

In the fall of 1899, he entered Yale just as his brother had. He choose a variety of subjects to study including physics, accounting, economics, and mechanics. While out of school for the one summer, he traveled all over the world. He then graduated from Yale in 1903, and went to the Northwestern college of law. He graduated from there in 1906, and was admitted to the bar in 1908.

McCormick was also involved in the City of Chicago and his country. He served on the Chicago City Council for two years. McCormick also became a colonel in World War I. While in the war he said "the United States should stay out of so many conflicts." He was awarded the United States distinguished service medal.

McCormick was named president of the Tribune company in 1911. He and his cousin, Joseph Medill Patterson, shared the functions of publisher and editor of the *Tribune* from 1914-1925. Then, in 1925, he became the sole editor and publisher because Patterson became preoccupied with the *Daily News*. When McCormick became president of the *Tribune*, he proposed a plan for the *Tribune* to build their own paper mill to keep the price of newspapers low. It took two years to build this newspaper mill. The newspaper kept growing to become the world's richest newspaper. McCormick used his paper to urge Americans to not enter World War II. The *Tribune* was also called the "World's greatest newspaper" for as long as McCormick was working there.

McCormick's family was a big part of his life. His father, Robert Sanderson McCormick, was a U. S. diplomat, and was the first American ambassador to Austria-Hungary. His mother, Katherine Medill, was the daughter of Joseph Medill editor and proprietor of the *Chicago Tribune*. Joseph Medill was also a founder of the Republican Party. McCormick also had one brother, Joseph Medill, and one sister, Katrina, who died before he was born. In 1915 he married Amie Irwin Adams, who died in 1939. He then married Maryland Matheson Hooper in 1944. He had no children with either of his two wives.

McCormick died on April 1, 1955, at his estate in Wheaton, Illinois. He helped to establish one of the most lasting influences, the Medill School of Journalism at

Northwestern University. McCormick spent a great deal of his time working on the *Chicago Tribune*, but he did manage to find time to write some books. He was the author of these two books, *The American Revolution and its Influence on World Civilization* in 1945, and *The War without Grant* in 1950. McCormick is still a well known publisher of the *Chicago Tribune*, and will never be forgotten for the good deeds he did in his life. [From Burton Cooke, "Colonel Robert Rutherford McCormick." 1997. Northern Illinois University. <www.bookrags.com?biography/robert-rutherford-mccormick> (Oct. 12, 2007); Joseph Gies, *The Colonel of Chicago*; Soylent Communications. "Robert McCormick." 2007. NNDB Tracking the Entire World <www.nndb.com/people/153/000159673> (Oct. 12, 2007); Richard Norton Smith, *The Colonel*; and Thomson Corporation, "Robert Rutherford McCormick Biography." 2005. Book Rags <www.lib.niu.edu/ipo/1997/ihy970450.html> (Oct. 12, 2007).]

The *Chicago Tribune*'s Coverage of the Great Chicago Fire

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The Great Chicago Fire caused 300 deaths, 90,000 people to become homeless, destroyed 17,500 buildings, and a total loss of $200,000,000. And at the same time, the *Chicago Tribune* practically became a celebrity. The *Tribune* covered many aspects of the Great Fire. Besides providing essential information, the *Tribune* gave editorials persuading Chicago to cheer up and rebuild the city, which had been destroyed by the fire. This was the greatest help that the *Tribune* gave, and had a huge impact on the city and *Tribune* then and now. To help Chicago avoid potential disaster, the *Chicago Tribune* wrote about fire prevention; later, when 1871's Great Chicago Fire erupted, the *Tribune* gave detailed fire prevention and confidence-boosting stories, which convinced Chicagoans to help rebuild the city, making it much more developed today than before.

It was just an ordinary summer in Chicago when complaints of the city's fire safety and state of being started showing up in the *Chicago Tribune* newspaper almost every day. One reason for this was the buildings in Chicago. Chicago's buildings were mostly wooden, and all were a fire hazard. The *Tribune* sent public announcements of this, and many agreed. "The absence of rain for three weeks has left everything in so flammable a condition. . . ," reported the *Tribune*. The *Chicago Tribune* wanted action. The paper stated that it would keep printing these complaints until progress was made. Meanwhile, the Tribune Building had been redone with fireproof materials for protection. But this "fireproof" building actually

had a wooden roof, making it a wasted effort. However, the *Chicago Tribune*'s predictions came true on October 7, 1871, when a small fire erupted; it was the prequel to a much more devastating conflagration the next day, the Great Chicago Fire.

As the city panicked, *Tribune* workers calmly stayed in their workplaces; for they were "safe" in their "fireproof" building. They continued to routinely print. Because of the building's wooden roof, it burned down. The newspaper was able to continue printing two days after the fire. It was important to give news of the fire to inform others.

On October 10, 1871, the *Tribune* started publication again. The spirits of Chicago soon rose. The newspaper convinced Chicagoans to "CHEER UP!". The article, by Joseph Medill, stated, "Chicago still exists. . . .CHICAGO SHALL RISE AGAIN." And then came hope, spreading quicker than the fire. The confidence given to the people by the *Chicago Tribune* newspaper helped by giving them the will to take action, which was helped by a truth revealed by the *Tribune*. Even before the fire, Chicago was slightly underdeveloped. If people would get out of their confusion and sorrow, to help, Chicago would recover faster. Almost immediately after this message was printed, many Chicagoans heeded it.

Much of the help provided by the *Tribune* was because of its workers. William Bross was one of these people. When the Tribune Building was destroyed, he went to New York to get equipment for printing. He got more on this trip, though. Bross was the first witness of the fire to go to New York, and talked to reporters. Thanks to him, the news was spread farther around the country. Bross

assured businessmen, especially bankers, that Chicago would rise again. He also encouraged them to visit Chicago after it was rebuilt. His influence reached people outside Chicago. Money was donated to the cause. Back in the city, Bross made a speech in the middle of the streets that told about Chicago's growth. Probably the most important person associated with the Great Chicago Fire was Joseph Medill, another of the *Tribune*'s workers. Later Medill was voted mayor of Chicago, and passed the Union Fireproof Ticket, which enforced stricter building codes, so that the burnt-down buildings would be rebuilt of stone or brick, and other stricter fire-safe rules were engaged. The city had become much safer from fire; this is what should have happened before to heed the *Tribune*'s warning.

This chapter of American life involved the *Chicago Tribune* significantly. This newspaper was a great help to the city then, but its impact reaches people today. Chicago's buildings were once poor. But the fire is why those buildings are better. Skyscrapers were made to replace some of the buildings; it was ideal for business, and helped the economy.

The fire influenced Chicago and other places as well. During and after the destruction of the city, some people moved away for personal safety from the city or the area of the city in which the fire had struck. Those families and individuals affected those who lived where they do today. Instead of living in one part of Chicago, they live in another, or instead of living in Chicago, they live in another city or state. People also moved *to* Chicago after the fire, thanks to Bross, who convinced people to move to Chicago when it recovered. Chicago improved as a result. With an even larger population, there would be more to employ, therefore a

better economy, and it goes back to what Bross and the *Tribune* said. The *Chicago Tribune* truly did influence Illinois because of its coverage on the Great Chicago Fire.

In conclusion, the *Chicago Tribune* wrote about fire prevention to help Chicago avoid disaster; and during the Great Chicago Fire's attack, the *Tribune* continued to help by giving detailed fire coverage and confidence-boosting stories, which became essential to Chicago's recovery. The *Tribune* helped motivate Chicago to rebuild itself. It became one of America's most populous cities. Without the *Chicago Tribune*, the city of Chicago would not be as developed, modern, or populous. [From John Ashenhurst and Ruth L. Ashenhurst, *All About Chicago*; Dynise Balcavage, *The Great Chicago Fire*; Elizabeth McNully, *Chicago Then and Now*; Donaly L. Miller, *City of the Century*; "100 Years After the Fire." *Chicago Tribune*, Oct. 8, 1971; Mary Kay Phelan, *The Story of the Great Chicago Fire, 1871*; Troy Taylor, "The Great Chicago Fire: 'the Greatest Disaster our City has Ever See,.'" *Weird and Haunted Chicago*. 2000. <http://www.prairieghosts.com/great_fire.html> (Sept. 3, 2007); "The Tribune Reports to Chicago on its Own Destruction." *Chicago Tribune*. (2007) <http://www.chicagohs.org/fire/conflag/tribune.html> (Sept. 30, 2007); and Lloyd Wendt, *Chicago Tribune*.]

Ethel Payne: "First Lady of the Black Press"

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Throughout history, data has been recorded by various methods. The newspaper, an excellent way to record events, has been so successful in preserving our past that today we still see newspapers in almost every corner of the world. Newspapers give writers a chance to not only report what is happening around the world, but also to express one's opinions. Ethel Payne, a bold journalist who fought for civil rights, used the newspaper as an opportunity to share her views on the topic of segregation.

On August 14, 1911, Ethel Lois Payne was born in Chicago, Illinois. From day one she knew her life would be tough, being the descendent of slaves. Her parents, William and Bessie Austin, worked hard to support six children. When Ethel was twelve, her father, who worked as a Pullman porter, passed away. As a result, Ethel's mother was forced to teach high school Latin and clean houses.

In 1920, Ethel, after graduating from Lindblom High School, attempted to fulfill her dream of becoming a lawyer. She applied to law school, but was rejected because of her race. Unwilling to accept defeat, Payne attended two different colleges in Chicago and after graduating, worked for the Chicago Public Library as a clerk. She also became involved with the Illinois Human Rights Commission, fighting for equality in her neighborhood. Desiring a more challenging life, she took the opportunity to work as a hostess for the Army Special Services Club and was quickly sent to Tokyo, Japan, where she organized leisure activities for African-American troops. While there, Payne kept a diary, writing about her personal experiences with segregation among the troops. In 1950,

she was greeted by *Chicago Defender* journalist Alex Wilson and showed him the diary. Impressed by her works, Wilson showed Payne's diary to his editor. Much to Payne's surprise, many of the entries in her diary made the front page of the *Chicago Defender*, and she was offered a job with the newspaper. Since the army was not happy with Payne for reporting misconduct among the officers, she quickly took the offer.

Returning to the United States in 1951, Payne, along with writing full-time for the *Defender*, attended night classes at the school of journalism at Northwestern University in Chicago, where she received her degree in 1955. Louis Martin, her editor, hired her to write features, but with Payne's work ethic, he soon had her writing hard-hitting, front-page stories. In 1952, after writing an article dealing with the adoption crises of African-American babies, the Illinois Press Association presented her an award for best news story. As a result, her editor allowed her to investigate any story she desired. Losing interest in the news of Chicago and having been offered a more favorable job with another newspaper, she turned down that offer when she received the opportunity to act as the *Defender*'s one-person news-bureau in Washington D.C.

Once at the capital, Payne immediately applied to be a part of the White House press corps, giving her a White House position at press conferences. She was only the second African-American woman to receive this honor. Although it was an unwritten rule that African-Americans never asked questions at these conferences, Payne took a gamble and asked President Eisenhower about the Lincoln Day celebration incident, where the choir from Howard University, because of their race, was not allowed into the building where they were to perform. President Eisenhower, who had not heard of this, responded with an apology. Newspapers around the country were writing articles about Payne, an

African-American woman who had the courage to ask the President of the United States a question. From that point on, Payne became recognized at every press conference. The battle between the press and segregation had been won. Payne also confronted the president on the issue of segregated interstate travel, which proved to be a touchy subject for Eisenhower. When asked by Payne how long it would be before desegregation occurred on interstates, the president's temper flared and he raised his voice at her, stunning the audience. After this, Payne was never recognized again at White House press corps conferences.

Covering breaking news in and out of the country, Payne was reporting for the *Chicago Defender* at almost all major civil rights events in the South. She was sent to Montgomery, Alabama in 1956 to record the news of Rosa Park's refusal to give up her seat to a white man. Also, while still in Montgomery, she witnessed and wrote about the bus boycott led by Martin Luther King, Jr. and even joined those marching. During the effort to integrate the University of Alabama and at the enrollment of nine African-American students in Little Rock, Arkansas, Payne was there. Not only did she follow breaking news in the United States, but also outside the country. Payne, covering stories all over the world, was named the first African-American woman to focus on international news. During times of war, Payne reported news at the locations of the wars, following United States soldiers almost everywhere. Altogether, Payne recorded news incidents from over thirty countries on six different continents.

After the *Defender* transferred Payne back to Chicago as an associate editor for the paper, she decided it was time for her to move on, so in 1978, she resigned, ending her twenty-seven-year career with the paper. Lecturing, writing columns for several

different African-American newspapers, and teaching at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee occupied most of her free time.

On May 28, 1991, at the age of seventy-nine, Ethel Lois Payne died from a heart attack at her home in Washington, D.C. Her works will be commemorated as well as her persistent and devoted nature towards life. Being the strong woman she was, Payne, through her writings, gave the African-Americans a voice. Ethel Payne will go down in history as the "First Lady of the Black Press". [From Donald A. Ritchie, *American Journalists*; Rodger Streitmatter, *Raising Her Voice*; Wallace Terry, *Missing Pages*; and Roland Wolseley, *Black Achievers in American Journalism*.]